

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 2904

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By Mr. Coughlin of Dedham, petition of Robert K. Coughlin and others relative to increasing certain veterans benefits. Veterans and Federal Affairs.

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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### PETITION OF:

Robert K. Coughlin                      Steven M. Walsh  
James R. Miceli

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In the Year Two Thousand and Five.

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### AN ACT REGARDING VETERANS BENEFITS.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1     Section 5 of chapter 115 of the General Laws, as appearing in  
2     the 2000 Official Edition is hereby amended by striking out para-  
3     graphs seven and eight and inserting in place thereof the follow-  
4     ing paragraphs:—

5     “Effective July first of every year, subject to appropriation, the  
6     Secretary of Veterans’ Services shall increase the budget of each  
7     eligible recipient except for “shelter” and “fuel” as discussed  
8     below, by an amount equal or greater than the Cost of Living  
9     Adjustment given to the average Social Security recipient on or  
10    about the same effective date.

11    Effective July first of every year, subject to appropriation,  
12    before taking into consideration any available income and  
13    resources, the Secretary of Veterans’ Services shall establish a  
14    budget for a shelter allowance equivalent to the Rent Estimates  
15    for Fair Market Rent for the county of Metropolitan Statistical  
16    Area of the applicant as established by the US Department of  
17    Housing and Urban Development for the year closest to the effec-  
18    tive date of the budget by the Secretary of Veterans’ Services.

19    Effective July first of every year, subject to appropriation,  
20    before taking into consideration any available income and

21 resources, the Secretary of Veterans' Services shall establish a  
22 budget for a fuel allowance which shall be at least equal to an  
23 amount sufficient to light, heat and cool the house, apartment or  
24 condominium of the recipient(s) of benefits. The Secretary of Vet-  
25 erans' Services shall consult reports from the US Department of  
26 Energy, US Department of Housing and Urban Development, US  
27 Department of Labor (CPI Division) and other similar resources in  
28 establishing a rate sufficient to light, heat and cool the dwellings  
29 of the recipients and shall make available to the members of the  
30 public the analysis used in the establishment of rates.

31 The sufficient of said rates shall be reviewable by the Division  
32 of Appellate Law Appeals. Any applicant of benefits, recipient of  
33 benefits, municipality, veterans' agent or director of veterans'  
34 services or their designated agent shall be allowed to appeal to  
35 DALA."